

Message Text

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16

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SY-05 OPR-02 SCCT-01 IO-10 INRE-00

SSO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 NIC-01 EB-07

SIL-01 AID-05 SCA-01 SCS-03 /090 W

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R 170558Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY DACCA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6109

INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 1359

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, BG

SUBJECT: BOMBINGS IN DACCA

1. BOMBS EXPLODED IN DACCA IN AT LEAST THREE PLACES DURING THE EVENING OF SUNDAY, MARCH 16, THE EVE OF PRESIDENT MUJIBUR RAHMAN'S WELL-PUBLICIZED 56TH BIRTHDAY. THE PLACES CHOSEN WERE (A) THE BAR OF THE INTERCONTINENTAL, WHERE ONE DIED AND FOUR WERE INJURED, (B) NEW MARKET, A MIDDLE-CLASS SHOPPING AREA, WHERE THREE WERE INJURED, AND (C) THE BENGALI LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER SANGBAD, SUPPORTER OF THE FORMER PRO-MOSCOW NAP/MUSAFFAR PARTY; THE SANGBAD INCIDENT INVOLVED A FIRE BOMBING ONLY. SOME ACCOUNTS SAY 12 IN ALL WERE INJURED; MOST WERE RELEASED FROM THE HOSPITAL AFTER TREATMENT. ANOTHER EXPLOSION WAS HEARD IN THE NEW MARKET AREA LATER IN THE NIGHT BUT THERE IS NO CONFORMATION THAT A BOMBING WAS INVOLVED. ONE LOCAL NEWSPAPER, HOWEVER, CLAIMS THE FORMER OFFICE OF NAP/M WAS ALSO BOMBED.

2. ON MARCH 14 MOLOTOV COCKTAILS WERE THROWN INTO
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THE MORNING NEWS AND DAINIK BANGLA NEWSPAPER OFFICES,

WHICH ARE HOUSED IN THE SAME BUILDING; ONLY A MINOR FIRE RESULTED. IN ADDITION, AMONG THE CONTINUING SERIES OF LOCAL POLITICAL MURDERS WAS THE MARCH 12 SHOOTING OF ROWSHAN ARA BAKUL, CHAIRMAN OF A UNION PARISHAD IN RANGPUR DISTRICT. BECAUSE SHE WAS THE ONLY WOMAN CHAIRMAN IN THE COUNTRY, HER DEATH HAS ATTRACTED MORE ATTENTION THAN IS USUAL IN SUCH CASES.

3. THE BOMBING INCIDENTS ARE CLEARLY DIRECTED AGAINST SHEIKH MUJIB. WITH CELEBRATIONS OF HIS BIRTHDAY PLANNED FOR HIS DAY (I.E., LOTS OF CALLERS WITH LOTS OF GARLANDS DEMONSTRATING THE PEOPLES' AFFECTION FOR THEIR NETA), THE BOMBINGS ARE STARK REMINDERS THAT MUJIB HAS NOT WON OVER ALL THE BENGALEES. IN ADDITION, A MONSTER RALLY IS PLANNED FOR MARCH 26, BANGLADESH'S INDEPENDENCE DAY, AND SHEIKH MUJIB IS TO BE THE CENTRAL FIGURE (AND ONE SOURCE SAYS THE ONLY SPEAKER). BAKSAL WORKERS INDICATE THAT EVERY EFFORT WILL BE MADE TO BRING OUT A CROWD OF OVER ONE MILLION (THE MORE EXUBERANT ARE WILLING TO ENTERTAIN THE THOUGHT OF TWO MILLION) TO DEMONSTRATE TH POPULAR SUPPORT FOR THE PRESIDENT AND HIS NEW DISPENSATION. THOSE WHO HAVE SET OFF THE BOMBS MAY BE SEEKING TO ENCOURAGE SOME TO EXERCISE THEIR OPTION OF REMAINING HOME.
CHESLAW

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